

# **Newton Citizen's Commission on Energy**

Minutes of Meeting of Wednesday October 25, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

City Hall Cafeteria

Present: Eric Olson, Chairman, Fred Brustman, Michael Gevelber, Jonathan Kantar, Ira Krepchin, Jim Purdy; Cory Alperstein, Ed Craddock, Brant Davis, Branden Houston, Jon Klein

Chairman Eric Olson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members and other attendees introduced themselves. The minutes of the September 2017 meeting were reviewed and approved with revisions.

## **1. COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION**

### **a) Gevelber analysis (version 3?) of "Willingness to Pay" green power survey results**

MG presented GN survey with most recent data, which indicated a high proportion of people who stopped to be surveyed would pay more for additional renewable energy. About 13 percent said they would not be willing to pay more, but

Michael noted that Brookline received a low bid that priced their 25% default (above the 12 % state RPS requirement = 37%) at about \$2 extra for the average household, compared to Eversource Basic service. However, the Town decided not to push beyond the 25% extra renewables that Town Meeting had approved, even though their expectation was that the average monthly cost differential with Eversource Basic would be around \$7 extra.

Michael suggested that the City should consider a special class of people who are getting the R2 rate from Eversource and provide an option for them and others who could stay enrolled in the aggregation without paying for the default level of renewables.

### **b) status of Community Choice Aggregation contract with Peregrine**

Jim, who is on the City's working group along with Halina, gave a brief update on the contract and scope, which have been finalized. The City will be meeting with Peregrine early in November to discuss their preliminary drafts of public outreach materials.

## **2. Check-in with Bill Ferguson on efficiency efforts in Newton Public Buildings. Preliminary results given this summer's massive lighting swap out Newton North HS and next steps – can we compare additional weeks of performance. (Linked to this topic: understanding unexpectedly high consumption in Newton North at times during the past year.)**

### **Eric reported on his communication with Bill Ferguson**

Future municipal solar projects may move from Power Purchase Agreements to city ownership.. The City might also purchase RECs for 31,500 kWh to achieve a renewables level 5% above the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard for power used by the City.

Bill looked at the fleet roster of 280 vehicles owned by the City; 87 have an EV version available on the market and could be replaced with electric vehicles at some point. More charging stations for EVs are also planned; they cost approximately \$7000 per station.

Jim stated that providing more charging stations should be a major priority for serving both private and City vehicles. Michael noted that Massachusetts DOER will pay 50% of the cost.

Changing to LED lighting at Newton North High School is approximately 60-70 percent completed.

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**3. Analysis of “how we get there from here”, an effort to outline steps needed to achieve 100% clean energy for City of Newton’s municipal sector.**

Not discussed.

**4. Recent results across our fleet of solar panels -- the massive Rumford array is up and running. Recent production data – do they match expectations? Also Issues with neighbors, costs related to fence.**

Briefly discussed.

**5. Update on Eversource’s proposal affecting rooftop solar installations and its potential impacts on solar projects. Newton has joined other communities in protesting the proposal.**

The Eversource petition to the Department of Public Utilities includes a request to sharply reduce the net metering rate for large solar installations, including Newton’s installations of school building roofs and at Rumford Avenue. If this is accepted, all of the City’s facilities will become major money losers, because the City’s contracts with Ameresco would remain in place without sufficient revenue to cover these obligations. Newton is working leading an effort to grandfather the existing rates. We need to publicly support this effort.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Purdy